

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KUWAIT 05004 210927Z

11

ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00

PRS-01 EB-03 L-01 SP-02 RSC-01 (ISO) W

----- 056261

R 210845Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1557

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 5004

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, EINV KU BG

SUBJECT: MUJIBUR RAHMAN VISIT TO KUWAIT

SUMMARY: BANGLADESH PRIME MINISTER MUJIBUR RAHMAN VISITED KUWAIT NOVEMBER 11-13. ALTHOUGH MUJIB WAS GIVEN VIP TREATMENT AND EXTENSIVE FAVORABLE PRESS COVERAGE AND PUBLIC EXPOSURE, DETAILS OF HIS TALKS HAVE NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC HERE. NEVERTHELESS, IT APPEARS THAT GOK HAS MADE SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE COMMITMENT TO BANGLADESH. ECONOMIC RELATIONS ARE LIKELY TO EXPAND IN FUTURE, AND WE UNDERSTAND MUJIB WAS QUITE PLEASED WITH VISIT HERE. END SUMMARY
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1. BANGLADESH PRIME MINISTER MUJIBUR RAHMAN PAID THREE DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO KUWAIT NOVEMBER 11-13. HE WAS GIVEN FULL VIP TREATMENT BEGINNING WITH WELCOME AT AIRPORT BY HIS COUNTER-PART CROWN PRINCE/RPIME MINISTER JABER AL-AHMAD. THROUGHOUT
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 KUWAIT 05004 210927Z

VISIT MUJIB WAS GIVEN FULL AND FAVORABLE PRESS COVERAGE.

2. SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS FOCUSED, AS EXPECTED, ON ECONOMIC RELATIONS, PARTICULARLY KUWAITI INVESTMENT AND ASSISTANCE TO BANGLADESH. CERTAIN AREAS IN THE FIELDS OF AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY AND FLOOD CONTROL WERE IDENTIFIED FOR FURTHER COOPERATION. A DELEGATION FROM THE KUWAIT FUND FOR ARAB ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WILL GO TO DACCA SOON FOR ADDITIONAL DISCUSSIONS.

3. BOTH SIDES EXPRESSED FULL AGREEMENT ON MIDDLE EASTERN AND INDIAN OCEAN POLITICAL ISSUES, INCLUDING SUPPORT FOR THE NOTION THAT THE INDIAN OCEAN SHOULD BE AN INTERNATIONAL ZONE FOR PEACE. IN NEWSPAPER INTERVIEWS MUJIB TOOK A FEW SWIPES AT PAKISTAN, BUT THE OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE MERELY CALLED FOR EARLY AND SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF ALL REMAINING ISSUES THROUGH NEGOTIATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE IN THE SUB-CONTINENT.
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4. BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR WASIUDDIN GAVE ME FOLLOWING INFORMATION NOVEMBER 19 ON MUJIB'S DISCUSSIONS HERE:

(A) KUWAITI CASH PAYMENT TO BANGLADESH TOTALS ONLY \$20 MILLION SO FAR, BUT

(B) KUWAITIS PROMISED LOOK INTO POSSIBILITIES FOR PROFIT-MAKING JOINT VENTURES IN BANGLADESH IN PRIVATE SECTOR. AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST SHIPPING, CEMENT AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

(C) KUWAIT FUND WILL LOOK INTO VARIETY OF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS SUCH AS GAS LINES, ELECTRIFICATION AND COMMUNICATIONS.

(D) KUWAITIS PROMISED COMMODITIES LOANS, SO FAR UNSPECIFIED.

5. WASIUDDIN SAID THAT WHILE SPECIFIC AMOUNTS REMAIN TO BE WORKED OUT, MUJIB'S VISIT HAD TO ALL APPEARANCES BEEN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS, FAR BEYOND EXPECTATIONS. KUWAITIS SHOWED KEEN INTEREST IN BANGLADESH AND OBVIOUS UNDERSTANDING OF POLITICAL AS WELL AS ECONOMIC AND HUMANITARIAN REASONS FOR PROVIDING SUBSTANTIAL ASSISTANCE. IN LATTER CONNECTION, AMBASSADOR SAID (ASKING THAT THIS BE HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE) KUWAITIS TOLD
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 KUWAIT 05004 210927Z

MUJIB THEY COMPLETELY AGREED THAT ONE OF MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTIVES OF ECONOMIC AID TO BANGLADESH WAS TO PREVENT ADVANCE OF COMMUNISM IN THAT COUNTRY.

6. COMMENT: WE ANTICIPATE THAT MORE PUBLIC FORMS OF ASSISTANCE WILL BE THROUGH KUWAIT FUND AND, IN CASE OF INVESTMENTS, THROUGH KUWAIT FOREIGN TRADING, CONTRACTING AND INVESTMENT COMPANY (KFTCIC) WHICH IS 80 PERCENT GOK OWNED. KUWAIT FUND TRADITIONALLY

INSISTS THAT APPROPRIATE FEASIBILITY STUDIES AND OTHER ESSENTIAL
HOMEWORK BE COMPLETED BEFORE PROVIDING LOANS, AND KFTCIC WILL
WANT TO BE REASONABLY SURE THAT POTENTIAL INVESTMENT IS LIKELY
TO BE SAFE AND PROFITABLE. THEREFORE, AT LEAST SOME KUWAITI
FUNDS TO BANGLADESH MAY BE A BIT SLOW IN COMING. AS GOK GETS
MORE INVOLVED IN ASSISTING BANGLADESH IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO
SEE WHETHER ITS SOMEWHAT NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD PARTICIPATING
IN BANGLADESH AID CONSORTIUM WILL CHANGE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CollinP0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974KUWAIT05004
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740337-0282
From: KUWAIT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741125/aaaaauke.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 AUG 2002 by kellew0>; APPROVED <14 MAR 2003 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MUJIBUR RAHMAN VISIT TO KUWAIT SUMMARY: BANGLADESH PRIME MINISTER MUJIBUR RAHMAN VISITED KUWAIT
TAGS: PFOR, EAID, EINV, KU, BG, (RAHMAN, MUJIBUR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005